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Illinois Department of Transportation
Ann L. Schneider, Secretary

State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor



Project Study Group Unveils Preferred Alternative

After much discussion and constructive input by members of the Community Advisory Group (CAG), the Project Study Group (PSG) unveiled the preferred alternative for the project study corridor.

On February 8th, the fourth and final informational meeting of Phase 1 for the Illinois Route 3 improvement project was held at Waterloo Senior High School. Over 130 residents attending the meeting had the opportunity to review and comment on project information and updates since the last meeting held in September 2011 where more than 125 Waterloo residents attended.

Similar to the third open-house style public meeting for the Illinois Route 3 improvement project, this meeting showcased aerial mosaics detailing the project, including intersection improvements along the corridor. Design highlights included: results of the noise analysis that determined abatement (reduction) measures were warranted on the east side of Illinois Route 3 behind the homes on Mark Drive, a new traffic light at the intersection of Illinois Avenue, the Lakeview Drive roundabout and a relocated entrance to the Vandebrook subdivision. These design changes were originally presented to the community in September 2011 and were displayed at the meeting.



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A Message from the Region 5 Engineer



Omer Osman, P.E.,
Deputy Director of
Highways,
Region 5 Engineer

***H**ello! My name is Omer Osman and I am the new Region 5 Engineer. My tenure with the department began some twenty years ago as a planner/designer in District 4 in Peoria, IL. While there I held various positions with my most recent position being the Acting Operations Engineer for District 4's Bureau of Operations.*

***A**s I learn more about the goals and challenges of this project, I'm very pleased with the involvement of the community including attendance at public meetings, as well as comments/concerns submitted by the citizens of Waterloo. I am also excited to move forward with the project and feel that these improvements prepare the community for future growth and are beneficial to the safety of all motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.*

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Project Study Group Unveils Preferred Alternative

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Video demonstrations were available for the public to view as well. One video was an instructional video for how to use a modern day roundabout, which is a proposed improvement at the intersection of Illinois Route 156 and Lakeview Drive. The second video displayed AM & PM design year traffic operating along Illinois Route 156, which predicts no backups between Lakeview Drive and Illinois Route 3. A scale drawing of the new roundabout design with model farm machinery and cars was also on hand for the public to navigate the new roundabout design. The model demonstrated the special design features accommodating large machinery and tractor trailer trucks.

All attendees were given handouts describing the proposed improvements to the Illinois Route 3 corridor. These handouts included general information about the project, news about the depot being saved and information about noise considerations. A comment form was also included in the set of handouts along with two Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) roundabout pamphlets that discussed roundabout benefits, why they are necessary, and why they tend to be safer than a traditional traffic signal. To see all of the meeting materials, visit the project web site at www.dot.il.gov/ilroute3.



How Your Comments Influence the Overall Design...

No one knows a community better than those who live, work and play there daily. The residents of Waterloo are doing their part to make sure that the Project Study Group (PSG) for the Illinois Route 3 improvement project know this first hand.

Waterloo residents and business owners are influencing the overall design for the Illinois Route 3 improvement project. Through active participation in the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) engagement process ordinary citizens are reshaping the project's design. From the start of the study in 2010, members of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and the community at large have been providing the (PSG) valuable input and feedback that resulted in the PSG developing alternatives that improve safety and mobility for Waterloo residents as well as preserve and enhance scenic, economic, historic and natural qualities of the community.



The avoidance of the old railroad depot property was the first building in the community where active participation and input from the community made a difference in project design. A six-foot wide shared use path in front of the depot is now being proposed rather than a 10-foot wide path. This will enable cyclists to dismount and walk much like a crosswalk in order to avoid impacting the depot.

Expanding the scope to include the Vandebrook Drive intersection in the study limits was realized in one of the first public meetings. The relocation of Vandebrook Drive across from South Market St. came from community input. Scaling back the length of Illinois Route 3 improvements to its original limits was made possible by this design to relocate Vandebrook Drive. Safety along this stretch of Illinois Route 3 will increase, and a project cost savings has been realized.

Most recently, customers and bank leaders of the State Bank of Waterloo shared with the PSG issues and concerns that have influenced the project design. IDOT and members of the PSG met and determined that the proposed raised median for south leg of North Market should be removed and replaced with a different design that will allow for a bi-directional turn lane into the bank.

Per the suggestion of a CAG member, replacement of open ditches in front of Schnuck's property with curb and gutter to reduce the amount of right-of-way required was investigated. The PSG investigated this change and implemented the change because of the input from the CAG and additional correspondence with the property owner. Replacing open ditches for drainage with curb and gutter will reduce the overall cost of the project due to avoidance of utility relocations and by reducing the amount of right of way needed to be purchased.

IDOT and the PSG welcome your ongoing support and valuable feedback as we continue to progress and move forward with the beginning of Phase II. Your voice is unique and your input helps shape a project that embraces the future and preserves the community's character.

Noise Basics

Major Objectives of the Traffic Noise Analysis Process:

- Identify areas where possible traffic noise may occur;
- Determine existing traffic noise levels and predict future noise levels;
- Identify the possible traffic noise impacts;
- Consider and evaluate abatement measures to mitigate highway traffic noise impacts;
- If warranted, propose implementation of feasible and reasonable noise reduction measures;
- If mitigation is feasible and reasonable, then approach affected property owners to determine if mitigation is desired;
- Communicate the results to the public and local officials.

IDOT policy identifies general criteria that must be met before a noise barrier shall be recommended for implementation. These include the following:

- Noise barriers shall be evaluated to address identified traffic noise impacts;
- Noise barriers shall be cost effective (may not exceed the allowable noise abatement cost);
- Noise barriers shall achieve the noise reduction design goal;
- Noise barriers shall be deemed desired by a majority of the benefited receptors.

Other points:

- Highway traffic noise is not usually a serious problem at distances:
 - greater than 500 feet from heavily traveled freeways or;
 - more than 100 to 200 feet from lightly traveled roads;
- Noise abatement shall be evaluated for traffic noise impacts on undeveloped, permitted lands;
- The objective of the traffic noise analysis is to predict the worst hour traffic noise conditions.

Noise - A Factor to Consider

The PSG conducted a noise study along the entire 4-mile length of the corridor in order to determine if noise abatement (reduction) measures were warranted. The study looked at both existing (2010) and future (2034) traffic noise levels and evaluated the feasibility of proposed abatement measures.

IDOT policy stipulates that for noise abatement, such as a wall, to be included, it must be feasible and reasonable. To be feasible, factors are evaluated based on the following:

- Will it reduce noise by a noticeable amount?
- Can it physically be constructed in the space available?
- Will it be continuous without needing breaks for driveways or side streets?

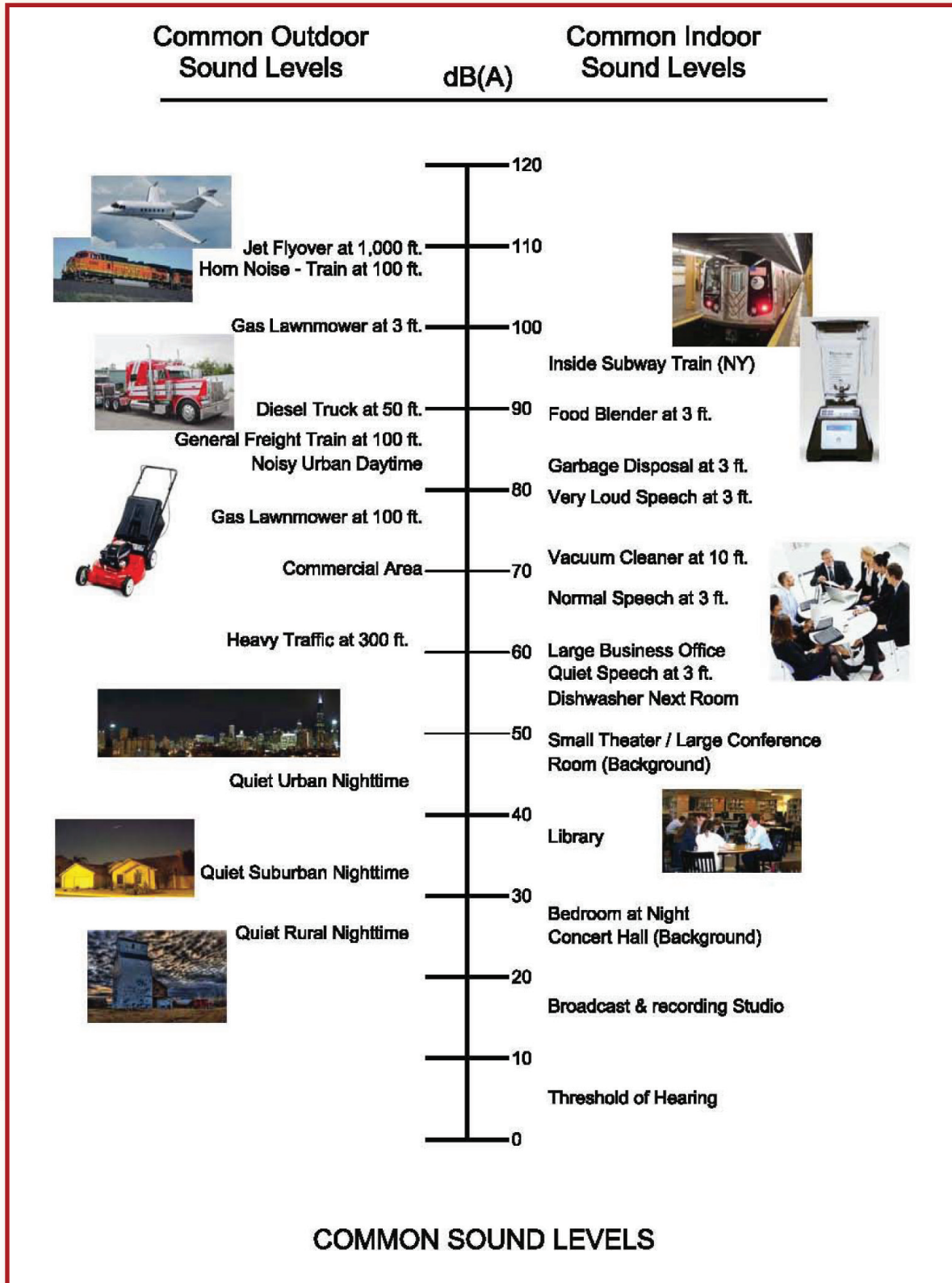
To be considered reasonable, cost effectiveness is taken into account, comparing cost of abatement versus amount of benefit it provides. In that respect, the number of residents/businesses, etc. that would see a noticeable reduction in noise comes into consideration, for the cost required to build the wall.

Based on the evaluation, a noise wall is warranted on the east side of Illinois Route 3 behind the homes on Mark Drive. The wall will be located approximately two feet off the shared use path in that area between the path and the majority of homes along the western side of Mark Drive. It was determined that a noise barrier approximately 8 to 12 feet high and 1,100 feet long would be implemented as part of this project. This would require a small strip of some property owner's property to be purchased for right-of-way (ROW) in order for IDOT to build and maintain the wall, while also providing for adequate drainage.

All 12 property owners along Mark Drive were contacted to determine if mitigation was desired. Six of the 12 property owners responded to the department's inquiry, and all were in favor of mitigation.

For more information or to view displays of the approximate noise wall location, visit the project web site at:
www.dot.il.gov/ilroute3/

Common Sound Levels



CAG Members Meet to Review Refined Alignment Alternatives

The fifth Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting was held January 18th at Waterloo City Hall. The Context Sensitive Solutions Process was reviewed and it was noted that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements were being met. Comments from the last public meeting held in September 2011 were also shared. There were a lot of positive comments regarding the proposed roundabout, while others had questions concerning whether or not the roundabout would actually benefit traffic flow. The PSG explained that having a roundabout would be more cost effective, increase traffic capacity and reduce traffic accidents.

The relocation of Vandebrook Drive was very well received. The proposed noise mitigation behind Mark Drive was discussed along with the features of IDOT's new noise policy. The entrance into Gateway FS from Illinois Route 156 was also reviewed. IDOT met with Gateway FS to explain how the raised median must be in place along Illinois Route 156 to ensure the proper operation of the dual left turn lanes in the eastbound direction. Motorists can still access Gateway FS from Illinois Route 3 on the west, from Lakeview Drive on the east and from eastbound Illinois Route 156 on the south.

It was announced that there would be two changes in the design of the highway as a result of the September public meeting. The first being the removal of a portion of the raised median on the south leg of the North Market Street intersection, with the new design extending the center bi-directional turn lane from the south to include existing entrances into State Bank on the west and Huck's on the east. The new design allows the two existing entrances to continue to operate as they do today.

The second change was the replacement of the open ditch in front of the Schnuck's property with curb and gutter to reduce the amount of additional right-of-way (ROW) required. Minimizing the amount of ROW reduces the number of utilities needing to be adjusted and allows the property to continue to function as it was originally intended.

IDOT also informed the group that the Traffic Noise Analysis for the four mile project was completed and details of this study are mentioned on page 3.



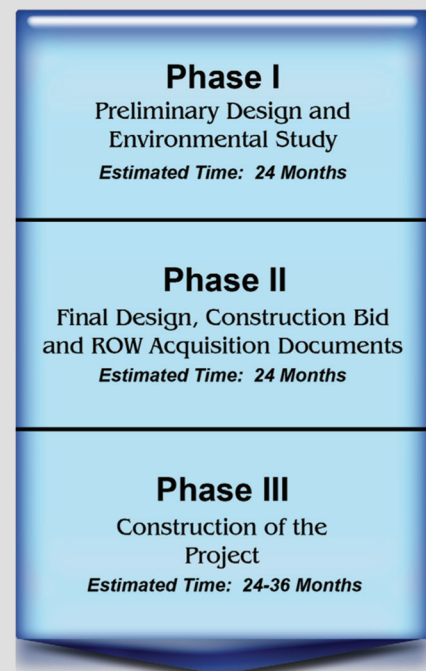
Next Steps...

As spring closes in on us, the Illinois Route 3-Waterloo project also gets closer to completing Phase I, the Preliminary Design and Environmental Study. This phase included the engineering and environmental analysis of potential alternatives of the Illinois Route 3 Corridor. The PSG has presented the preferred alternative and how it meets the following:

- the project's purpose and need; To improve safety on Illinois Route 3;
- its potential effect on the environment, residences, and businesses; and
- how it improves the overall transportation system with regards to safety and mobility.

Design approval of the Preliminary Design and Environmental Study is expected to be in spring 2012. Phase II activities, preparation of construction plans and actual land acquisition will then be initiated.

Project Timeline



Where We Are Land Acquisition Begins



This newsletter is published to provide regular updates regarding the progress of the Illinois Route 3 Waterloo Project



IDOT is committed to conducting business in a sustainable manner. To that end, we have chosen to print this newsletter on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper stock and to print with a commercial printer that also holds the certification. The Forest Stewardship Council is a non-profit organization devoted to encouraging the responsible management of the world's forests. FSC sets high standards that ensure forestry is practiced in an environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable way.



Contact Information

We welcome your questions and comments, which you may submit by mail to:

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By e-mail to:

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Or through our project web site at:

www.dot.il.gov/ilroute3

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